

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

for the
Gadsden, Arizona Wastewater Collection and Conveyance System Construction

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering authorizing the award of a Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF) grant to the Gadsden Improvement District to provide wastewater collection and treatment services for the unincorporated community of Gadsden. Gadsden is located in Yuma County, Arizona, approximately five miles north of the U.S.-Mexican border on U.S. Highway 95.

The project will involve the construction of a wastewater collection system for approximately 240 households in Gadsden, a local lift station, a force main along U.S. 95 that will convey the sewage to the city of San Luis wastewater treatment plant five miles to the south, and the acquisition of the needed capacity from the San Luis plant.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

Currently, there is no existing centralized sewage collection system within Gadsden. The only waste disposal facilities that exist are on-site treatment systems. These consist primarily of septic tank and leach field systems although there are a few cesspools. There are also some open discharge ditches. These systems are generally old and many are failing due to age and inadequate maintenance.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to address the human health and environmental issues relating to contamination of water, both surface and groundwater. Failed and failing septic systems on individual lots allow wastewater to surface and flow to ditches and low-lying areas where surface water collects, creating an unacceptable risk of contact by residents and the possibility of contamination of groundwater and drinking water sources. The proposed project will protect public health and the environment by eliminating untreated sewage discharges and leakage from faulty treatment systems in Gadsden.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND CONDITIONS

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, EPA has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that examines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project in the U.S., as well as the transboundary impacts that might occur in Mexico. After considering a wide range of regulatory, and socio-economic factors, the

EA did not identify any significant impacts to the environment that would result from the implementation of this project.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The EA is on file, along with other project materials, and is available for public inspection at the EPA Region 9 office in San Francisco, California. Copies of the EA are also available for public review in Gadsden at the Gadsden Post Office, 18356 South Highway 95 (Main Street), Gadsden, AZ 85336, or in Yuma, at the Yuma county Department of Development Services, 2703 South Avenue B, Yuma, AZ, attention: Nancy Ngai, (928) 329-2300. In addition, the EA will be posted on the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) website at <http://www.cocef.org> and on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/region9/water>.

Interested persons, including those who disagree with this proposal, may submit comments to EPA Region 9 within 30 calendar days from the date this document is issued. No administrative action will be taken on this proposed project prior to the expiration of this comment period, which ends December 2, 2002. Comments, via letter, fax or email, should be sent to Tom Konner at the address listed below.

Tom Konner (WTR-4)
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After EPA assesses any comments received, those comments, EPA's responses, and this Finding of No Significant Impact will be forwarded to the Regional Administrator for review and signature. If the Regional Administrator signs this FNSI, it will not be recirculated for review but will be available to any individual upon request.

FINDING

After review of the EA and any comments received, EPA has determined that the proposed project will not have a significant impact on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared for this project.

Wayne Nastri
Regional Administrator

Date